

The University of Chicago

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS OF THE
ANGLICAN COMMUNION

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL IN
CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR
OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH HISTORY
1932

By
CHARLES HAROLD HARRISON

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CHAPTER I
REVIVAL OF THE ANGLICAN RELIGIOUS ORDERS

If it is true, as Bishop Weller has said, that "the Church of England did not suppress the monasteries, nor had she any hand in it,"¹ it is also true, on the other hand, that there is very little evidence of any great eagerness on her part, during the following three hundred years at least, to restore the Religious Life. There was, it is true, opposition to the suppression of the monasteries and convents in the first place (and there have been Anglicans, from time to time, who have expressed favorable opinions concerning some phase or another of the Religious Life);² nevertheless, the fact remains that as time went on most Anglicans apparently came to assume that the Religious Life, whatever its good points might be, was essentially foreign to the nature of the post-Reformation Anglican Church. And if, as Bishop Weller has said, "The English Church has never been without many persons who . . . prayed God for the revival of the Religious Orders,"³ we, at least, do not know who they were.

In or about the year 1625, however (nearly one hundred years after the suppression), one encounters what is apparently the first clear evidence of a tendency, on the part of post-Reformation Anglicans, toward the actual revival of the Religious Life--Nicholas Ferrar's community at Little Gidding. There are many references, of a kind, descriptive of this community; but most of them are historically of little or no value because of inadequate documentation. It is said that the records of the community--if there were any--were wilfully destroyed by the soldiers of the Puritan Parliament in, or shortly after, 1646;⁴

¹Reginald Heber Weller, Religious Orders in the Anglican Communion, Hale Memorial Sermon No. 4 (Milwaukee: Young Churchman Co., 1909), p. 20.

²Henry Spelman, The History and Fate of Sacrilege (London, 1698); William Somner (1598-1609), Robert Plot (1640-1696), John Prince (1643-1723), Sir Robert Atkins (1647-1711), Sir Simon Degge (1612-1704), Browne Willis (1682-1760) et al.; cf. Ralph W. Sockman, The Revival of the Conventual Life in the Church of England in the Nineteenth Century (New York City: W. D. Gray, 227 W. 17th St., 1917), pp. 7-24.

³Weller, op. cit., p. 21.

⁴H.P.K. Skipton, The Life and Times of Nicholas Ferrar (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1907), pp. 178-79.

in any event, it is quite clear that they have vanished.

Skipton quoted the purported Horarium (daily schedule) of the community.¹ It is said, for example, that they "rose at four," that each hour of the day had its appointed tasks, and that the entire psalter was recited (by one or another of the groups of the community) each day. There are many other interesting statements of similar nature--but all of more or less questionable authenticity, and therefore of little use to us. However, this much would appear to be clear--that Little Gidding was not a Religious Community in the technical sense of the term (there is no evidence, for example, that they were under Vows); though it is equally clear that it may be considered as a definite step in the direction of the revival of the Religious Life as such.

Apparently two hundred more years went by, however, before one encounters evidence of any further interest at all comparable to that shown by Little Gidding. It is true that Skipton makes the statement that, "in 1664 we read of Doctor Buck, one of the Royal Chaplains, expressing his 'concern at the want of Religious houses in the Church of England,' and it seems clear from the existence of a form of service for such houses that the later non-jurors at least contemplated the establishment of institutions on these lines"²--but he does not mention the source of his information. The statement could, of course, be true; though we have not found any similar references in the writings of the period or in Caritas Anglicana (which purports to be a special study of Anglican religious societies from 1678 to 1740).³

In 1839 and 1840, however, one arrives at the real beginning of the Revival. The documentation is ample at this point, and it will be found that the men who were then seeking to revive the Religious Life were--perhaps without exception, and this is significant--those who then were, and who had been during the preceding six years, the leaders of the Anglo-Catholic Revival; for example, Pusey, Keble, and Newman.⁴ It was, for example,

¹Ibid., pp. 99-100.

²Ibid., p. 87.

³Garnet V. Portus, Caritas Anglicana (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1912); cf. Ralph W. Sockman, op. cit., pp. 38-59.

⁴Sockman does not agree with this judgment (cf. op. cit., pp. 58-59). But it is believed that none of his references is entirely relevant to the point in question, e.g., the expressions of mere commendation of the Religious Life to which he refers are not equivalent to expressions of definite intention to revive the Religious Life itself (and Robert Southey's earlier

apparently in either 1839 or 1840¹ that Pusey--the Father of the Anglo-Catholic Revival--wrote a letter in which he discussed the possible formation of a Community of Sisters of Charity.²

Apparently, also, it was in 1840 that Perceval Ward--another leader in the Revival--wrote to Pusey to express his satisfaction at hearing of the projected Sisterhood and remarking that, "If we could not meet the Roman Catholics by an institute" similar to that of the Religious Life "the population of our great towns would be lost to our Church."³ (Newman had expressed a similar sentiment when, on January 5, 1840, he had written that "I feel sure that such institutions are the only means of saving some of our best members from turning Roman Catholics."⁴)

Ward also urged the formation of Religious Communities because of their value in religious work, for, he said,

Thousands of souls, the care of the Church of England, are year by year allowed to perish, because we dare not make ventures beyond our old, inefficient machinery. Surely at such a time, everything but principle is to be risked.⁵

It was in the same year, too (1840), that Newman and Pusey corresponded with reference to Newman's proposed monastery (if one might call it that) at Littlemore.⁶

It was also in this year that Pusey wrote to Keble:

Newman and I have separately come to think it necessary to have some 'Soeurs de la Charité' in the Anglo-Catholic Church. He is going to have an article on it in the British

plans, to which he also refers, are not entirely relevant inasmuch as they contemplated only a community without "irrevocable vows, onerous laws, and ascetic practices"--and this would not be the Religious Life.

¹The letter was written on the black-edged paper which Pusey is said to have used for a year after his wife's death in 1839.

²The phrase "Sisters of Charity" is here a general term (such as might apply to any Sisterhood) and not a specific title.

³Maria Trench, The Story of Dr. Pusey's Life (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1900), p. 164.

⁴John Henry Newman, Letters, ii, pp. 295-98 (quoted in Trench, op. cit., p. 160).

⁵Trench, op. cit., p. 164.

⁶John Henry Newman, Apologia pro Vita Sua (ed. 1873), p. 131.

Critic; if no one else writes it, he will do it himself.
... My notion was that it might begin by regular employment as nurses, in hospitals and lunatic asylums, in which last Christian nursing is so sadly missed.¹

Inasmuch as an exhaustive search has not revealed any earlier correspondence on the subject, perhaps the preceding documentation will be sufficient to show that the first more or less definite plans for the revival of the Religious Life were probably made in 1839 and 1840 (especially, perhaps, the latter year); and also that, inasmuch as these plans originated with the leaders of the Anglo-Catholic Revival (and with no others), the resuscitation of the Religious Life itself may be considered to be the product of the Anglo-Catholic Revival.²

It might also be mentioned that, whatever other motives may have been present in the revival of the Religious Life, the preceding documentation has shown the presence of these three:

- 1) a desire to hold those Anglicans who might otherwise go into the Roman Church;
- 2) a desire to provide an adequate technique for social service;
- 3) a desire to provide an adequate technique for religious work.

The motive, in other words, would seem to have been pragmatic--that is, utilitarian; this, however, does not necessarily apply to the motives of the Religious themselves--which is another matter. And now let us observe the way in which these plans materialized.

Anglican Religious opinion assigns to Miss Marian Hughes the distinction of being the first woman to take religious Vows in the post-Reformation Anglican Church--and no evidence has been encountered to the contrary. In any event it is said--upon what is believed to be reliable evidence--that "Miss Marian Hughes . . . had, on the day of Lucy Pusey's First Communion (in Saint Mary's Church, Oxford), and kneeling by her side, vowed herself to a life of special devotion." This was in 1841, and she subsequently became the Mother Foundress of the Society of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, Oxford. (Lucy herself had planned to enter the Religious Life; but she died on April 22, 1844, at the age of fourteen.)³

It was not, however, until the year 1845 that we have the

¹Trench, op. cit., pp. 165-66.

²Of. note 4 on p. 2.

³Trench, op. cit., pp. 235, 266, 267.

organization of the first post-Reformation Anglican Sisterhood--Pusey's "Sisters of Mercy" (a general term) in Regent's Park, London. Miss Hughes was never a member of this Community, but concerning it she wrote:

The house for this first Anglican Sisterhood--No. 17, Park Village, Regent's Park--was taken in the name of Lord John Manners. . . . The Sisters were employed in visiting the poor and sick at their own homes, receiving and training orphans, giving shelter to women of good character while seeking occupation, also in the care of a day school for very poor children.¹

It is interesting to note that of the fourteen laymen who sponsored this project one was Gladstone and that five others were members of the English nobility.² But the reaction on the part of the common people was not, at first, so favorable as Pusey had perhaps hoped. Some of them thought the Sisters were "disguised Roman Catholics" and stayed away from church. Their feeling is explained in the following quotation from a letter, to Pusey, written by the rector of the parish in which the Sisters were working:

I think I told you some time ago of a falling off in their attendance at church; this has recently become still more marked, and from the inquiries I have made I have no doubt that considerable alarm exists amongst them. They do not know what to make of the Sisters, and suspect them of being disguised Roman Catholics. . . . The result is that the usefulness of the Sisterhood is greatly threatened; the poor are regarding them with suspicion instead of love and veneration.³

The subsequent history of this first Sisterhood (sometime called "Sisters of Mercy" and sometimes referred to as "Sisters of the Holy Cross") is extremely confusing, at times, and contradictory accounts are encountered; nevertheless, it is believed that the following steps are distinct and authentic:

- 1) In 1849 Miss Lydia Sellon (Mother Lydia) founded the Society of the Holy Trinity, Devenport;
- 2) In the same year several of the Sisters of the Holy Cross (founded 1845) went to Plymouth to assist the Society of the Holy Trinity in nursing cholera patients;
- 3) In 1850 Pusey laid the foundation of Saint Saviour's, Osnaburgh Street, London--the first House built for post-

¹Ibid., p. 269.

²Ibid., p. 272 (it is not claimed that this represents the proportionate support of the nobility).

³Ibid., p. 274.

Reformation Anglican Sisters and intended for the Sisters of the Holy Cross;

4) In 1852 the Sisters of the Holy Cross moved into this new home, and lived there until 1854;

5) In 1854 the Mother and several Sisters went with Miss Nightingale to nurse the soldiers in the Crimean War;

6) Shortly after, the Mother resigned (in Constantinople--because of ill health) and the Community united with the Society of the Holy Trinity, Devenport;

7) In 1861 the Community--apparently the combined Community, though under the name of the Society of the Most Holy Trinity --built part of Ascot Priory (its present location);

8) In 1876 Ascot Priory (Society of the Most Holy Trinity) sold Saint Saviour's, Osnaburgh Street.¹

It would appear, then, that the present Society of the Most Holy Trinity, Ascot Priory, is the direct descendant (through amalgamation with the Sisters of the Holy Cross) of the first Sisterhood in the post-Reformation Anglican Church--the Sisterhood, that is, founded by Pusey in 1845.

With some such understanding, then, of the process by which the Religious Communities were revived in the post-Reformation Anglican Church, we may now turn our attention to the approximately one hundred Religious Orders which exist in the Anglican communion to-day and to a consideration of certain salient points connected with their life and work.

¹(a) The History of Ascot Priory Convalescent Hospital and Orphanage (received from Ascot Priory; date and place of publication not given), pp. 4-6.

(b) Warden of the Society of the Most Holy Trinity, Ascot Priory, note, July 31, 1931.

(c) Notes received from Sister Constance, S.H.N., based upon research in the Library of the Convent of the Holy Nativity Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

CHAPTER II

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF VOCATION

There are, perhaps, few matters connected with the Religious Life which arouse more interest than that of Motivation--the question, that is, as to why people become religious. It is, needless to say, a difficult question to answer--perhaps even impossible to answer--if one insists upon exact precision of truth; nevertheless, there are certain items of circumstantial evidence which are to the point.

It is well, perhaps, first of all to notice that the Anglican Religious themselves usually have one theory of Vocation --and that is that it is supernatural and exclusively the gift of God. This may be illustrated by the following items of documentation.

1) The Mother of Saint Anne's Convent, Chicago, in talking with a priest who had sought to influence one of his parishioners to try her Vocation in Saint Anne's Convent, said, 'After all, Father, only the good Lord can give the girl a Vocation';¹

2) The Mother of the Community of Epiphany (Truro, Cornwall) stated that, 'It is impossible, of course, to say what other motives an Aspirant may have, but only one influence in Vocation is recognized as lawful--and that is the sense of a Divine call, and the will to respond';²

3) The author of The Religious Life expresses the epitome of this theory when he writes, 'It must ever be remembered that the call is of God; that it is His and His alone to give. It cannot be either acquired or developed.'³

It is not, of course, within the province of the historian to deny the possibility of a supernatural Vocation; nevertheless, this phase of the subject, because of its insusceptibility of proof, must lie outside the realm of his own consideration. That which may, however, be his legitimate concern is the presentation

¹Interview with a priest, name unknown, St. Anne's Convent, Chicago, 1929.

²Reverend Mother Edith Constance, C. E., written statement, July 24, 1931, p. 2.

³Four page brochure, anonymous, reprint from Quarterly Paper of Intercession and Thanksgiving for the Church's Work Abroad (Place of publication not known; January, 1910).

of such evidence as would seem to show that there have apparently been some Vocations,¹ at least, which may be accounted for, from a psychological point of view, entirely on the basis of exterior facts. Such, it is believed, are some of the following cases-- and it is not essential to the point in question that the motive be the one here suggested, but only that some such natural or psychological motive would, it is thought, be sufficiently strong to account for the Vocation in question.

In the first five cases² it is thought that the motive which could, in itself, be strong enough to account for the Vocation might be that of Desire for Security:

Case 1 - A priest, under ecclesiastical censure for inebriety and, consequently, without a parish and therefore without an income, immediately entered the monastery;

Case 2 - A seminarist, dismissed for disrespect to a professor (and therefore seemingly without a way of approach to the priesthood), immediately entered the monastery;

Case 3 - A Roman Catholic novice, dismissed on grounds of alleged immorality, and untrained to support himself in any other vocation, sought entrance into an Anglican Order;

Case 4 - A Roman Catholic actor, without work, needing food and lodging, visited an Anglican monastery and, a few days later, became a Postulant in the Order;

Case 5 - An elderly woman, on the eve of being ejected from her home for several months' non-payment of rent, entered a convent.

Perhaps in the following two cases³ the Vocation would find sufficient causation (even if no other factors were present) in the psychological motive of Sublimation of Affections:

Case 6 - A widow who had been deeply devoted to her husband, knelt by his coffin and vowed herself to the Religious life;

Case 7 - A woman, upon the death of her sister (upon whom her life had been centered), entered the convent.

It is often said that amongst Aspirants to the Religious Life there are sometimes those who have been "disappointed in love"; and certainly it does not require a very deep knowledge of psychology to understand how easily this could be so.

¹It is assumed, for purpose of this section, that a Religious may be said to have Vocation if he is happy and contented in the Religious Life and if he fits harmoniously into the life of the community.

²The nature of these cases precludes, of course, the giving of names and places.

³See n. 2 above.

There is one case which is of rather unmistakable directness in its Motivation; viz., the Desire to Avoid the Marriage Relationship:

Case 8 - A man, on the eve of his marriage (which was extremely distasteful to him) asked, upon the advice of his priest, to be released from the engagement and immediately entered the monastery.¹

In the following three cases--and they could probably be multiplied many times--the sufficient motive may perhaps have been that of Desire for Service:

Case 9 - A man, having a keen consciousness of the needs of the sick poor, entered (founded) an Order devoted to their care;²

Case 10 - A woman who, apparently through all her earlier life had had an intense loyalty to the Church of England, entered a Sisterhood especially devoted to that work;³

Case 11 - A woman, appalled at the lack of care accorded British lepers, entered (founded) an Order devoted to that work.⁴

That a few of the Communities themselves recognize the existence of such possible motives in Vocation would appear from the following statements:

1) The Reverend Mother of one Community states that she has known of the presence of elements which apparently indicated Vocations founded upon:

- a) Desire for economic security--three cases;
- b) Avoidance of unpleasant occupation--three cases;
- c) Desire for friendship--one case;
- d) Avoidance of marriage--perhaps.⁵

2) The Father Prior of the Order of St. Paul states that it is apparent that some Vocations are at least partially based upon:

¹Cf. note 2, p. 8.

²Gouverneur P. Hance, S.B.B., typewritten statement, July 21, 1931, p. 1; History of St. Barnabas' Free Home (North East, Pennsylvania: St. Barnabas' Brotherhood), p. 1; Faith and Work (North East, Pennsylvania: St. Barnabas' Brotherhood, undated), pp. 1-2.

³Cf. note 2, p. 8.

⁴Mother Clare, C.S.G., statement in handwriting, July 21 1931, p. 4.

⁵Cf. note 2, p. 8; statements made in an interview in August, 1931.

- a) Desire for economic security;
- b) Avoidance of unpleasant occupations;
- c) Avoidance of unpleasant elements in the secular life generally.¹

It is interesting to note that one Community feels that not only is "desire for security" apparent in some Vocations, but that this is especially true of "applications for admission from women over forty." They add, however, that "most of these return to secular life" before profession--which, nevertheless, appears to imply that some Vocations, at least, are realized largely on an economic basis.²

Bishop Grafton (founder of the Sisterhood of the Holy Nativity) wrote that the Religious Life should not be used

for the reformation of the indolent, the undisciplined, or the hysterical, nor a field for the self-opinionated, the morbid, or the designing; nor a home for the feeble, weak-minded, or destitute.³

And, again, that the Religious Life should not be entered by those who desire merely "to escape from an unpleasant home, or to exchange a laborious life for one seemingly less so, or to improve one's social position, or to live with some particular sister."⁴ But the very condemnation might seem to imply that the Bishop had known those who had attempted Postulancy upon grounds similar to those mentioned--though this must not be overemphasized, for whether they went through to their Professions is another matter and more essential to the point in question.

In any event, however, data have now been presented of twenty-four cases where Vocations can apparently, for all practical intents and purposes, be accounted for entirely on natural or psychological grounds. These twenty-four cases may be classified in this way:

11 Vocations Possible motive - Desire for security.

7 Vocations Possible motive - Avoidance of unpleasant relationships in secular life; i.e., unpleasant occupation, 4; marriage, 2; other elements, 1.

3 Vocations Possible motive - Desire for service.

¹Reverend Father Aidan, O.S.P., typewritten statement, July 29, 1931, p. 1.

²Reverend Mother Janet Mary, S.G.S., written statement, July, 1931, p. 2.

³Charles C. Grafton, Vocation (New York, N.Y.: Longmans Green and Co., 1914), pp. 88, 93.

⁴Ibid.

2 Vocations Possible motive - Sublimation of affections.

1 Vocation Possible motive - Desire for friendship.

It is not claimed that these are necessarily typical of other cases--for, for example, desire for service is probably a much more prevalent motive than the preceding cases would indicate. It is felt, however, that the cases are representative to this extent--that the three most prevalent psychological bases for Vocation are perhaps:

Desire for security; desire for service; desire to avoid unpleasant relationships in life. It is believed that these are all entirely normal desires.

If the Orders are of opinion, upon a frank and discerning analysis of their own experience, that it is possible for some people to achieve Vocation exclusively on natural or psychological grounds, then it would seem that two corollaries might logically follow; viz.:

1) that they be ever watchful for religiously minded persons who are psychologically ready for conversion to the Religious Life; viz.:

a) those who are concerned about their economic security;

b) those who are being subjected to unpleasant experiences of such nature as would be avoided in the Religious Life;

c) those who have an absorbing interest in the kind of work in which the Order specializes;

d) those who have, for any reason, recently lost the love and affection of one on whom their life had been more or less centered;

and that the Orders do everything possible to foster a Vocation in these people at these times;

2) That, instead of taking an apologetic attitude toward the natural or psychological origin of some Vocations, they assume an attitude of satisfaction in them. It is not to the discredit, but rather to the great credit, of the Religious Order that the religiously minded woman who faces a life of economic insecurity can find the solution of her problem in the devotion of her life to a Religious Community; or that some religiously minded persons who are suffering a great emotional shock (perhaps the loss of some loved one) can find peace and the harmonization of their disintegrated personalities by giving their all to a Religious Order; or that devout people who are intensely devoted to the cause of education, or of healing the sick, or of caring for the homeless and friendless, can find expression for their altruism by devoting their lives, without salary, to the similar work of a Religious Community. These psychological aspects of Vocation are not things of which to be ashamed; they are definite contributions to the welfare of the individual and of society.

CHAPTER III
INTERIOR LIFE OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS I

Note

Approximately eighty per cent of the Anglican Religious Orders are in the British Isles, the United States, or Canada--and the following observations are based entirely upon that group. No data were received from six of the largest Orders--three American and three English.

Horariums (Daily Schedules)

The communities rise early--most of them between 4:55 A.M. and 6 A.M., and apparently all of them not later than 6:30 A.M. There is wider variety, however, in the retiring hour, for it ranges approximately from 9 P.M. to 11 P.M.

The following Horarium of the American Franciscans (and Poor Clares) will illustrate a day's routine for an active order:

Morning

5:40 House called
5:45 Angelus
6:00 Meditation
6:30 Prime and Terce
7:00 Holy Mass
7:30 Frustulum (light breakfast) and care of cell
8:15 Sext, None, and Chapter
8:45 Work period (until 12:00)

Afternoon

12:00 Angelus
Examen, and reading of Holy Scripture (in chapel)
12:15 Dinner
12:45 Quiet Hour
1:45 Intercessions, and one decade of Franciscan rosary
2:00 Recreation
2:30 Work period (until 5:00)
5:00 Vespers (followed by Benediction on Sundays and certain holy days)
5:30 Prayer and spiritual reading (in chapel)

Evening

6:00 Angelus and collation (supper)
7:00 Compline
7:15 Work period (until 9:00)
9:00 Mattins, Lauds, Examen

With slight differences the preceding Horarium may be considered as rather typical of the active Communities. The Horariums of the Enclosed Communities differ, however, to the extent that most of their time, aside from that spent in saying the

Office, is largely devoted to prayer; and also to the extent that their activities may extend into the night hours (e.g., the Servants of Christ rise at 2 A.M. to say the Night Office, and the Society of the Precious Blood keep a watch before the Altar throughout one night each week and throughout three hours of each of the other nights of the week).

Breviaries used

No less than nine different Breviaries are in use amongst Anglican Religious. The most popular (especially in England) is Day Hours of the Church of England--though, in the United States, it has a close rival in the Office Book of St. Margaret (this latter book is also used by several of the Communities in England).

Perhaps the next most popular Breviary is Hours of Prayer¹--the Cowley² Office Book. But five other books are used by minority groups; viz.,

- 1) that of the Community of St. Mary;
- 2) that of the Order of the Holy Cross;
- 3) that of the Order of St. Paul;
- 4) the Breviarium Monasticum (Benedictine Latin Office);
- 5) the Sarum Breviary of 1531.³

Offices

There is almost complete uniformity in the nature of the Offices used. At least ninety-five of the Communities apparently use the traditional seven Canonical Hours; viz., Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline. Only two exceptions to this are known--the Brotherhood of St. Barnabas (American) and the Brotherhood of St. Francis of Assisi (English); and both of these orders work under unusual conditions.

Language of the Office

In almost all cases all the Hours are said in English, though the Society of the Precious Blood says them in Latin,⁴ and it is believed that that is also true of the Benedictine monks of Burnham Abbey,⁵ and perhaps of two or three other Communities. There is, of course, nothing essentially un-Anglican in the use

¹By Fr. Trenholme, S.S.J.E., published by Mowbray, London.

²Popular term for the Society of St. John the Evangelist.

³Published by Messrs. Ellis and Keene, 9 Ray Street, London.

⁴Mother Millicent Mary of the Will of God, S.P.B., letter, August 3, 1931, p. 9.

⁵They use the Benedictine Breviarium Monasticum.

of Latin Offices or other Latin devotions (there have been post-Reformation Latin Prayer Books), any more than devotions in any other tongue. (The essential Anglican principle at this point would appear to be that the participants must understand the language that they are using.)

Night Office

The Night Office is used very little in America, although the Franciscans and Poor Clares say it every evening, and there are a few other American Communities which recite it at certain seasons of the year (especially during Holy Week, and at the death of one of their Religious).¹ In the British Isles, however, it is used by a large number--perhaps the majority--of the Communities; many of these, every day; others, only at certain seasons.² The Congregation of the Servants of Christ say it (as has already been mentioned) in the middle of the night; and it is quite possible that one or two of the other Communities also do this. (In this connection it is interesting to recall that the Devenport Sisterhood--in 1863, at least--was in the habit of rising at 3 A.M. to say their office.)³ The tendency, however, is apparently to have the Office move forward from the middle of the night to the preceding evening (as often in England), and then (as usually in America) to disappear altogether.

Prayer Book Offices

The two Offices of the Book of Common Prayer--Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer (Mattins and Evensong)--are almost never used by the Communities as such⁴ (except, of course, in their public churches).

Other Devotions

There are many other devotions which are in more or less common use amongst Anglican Religious. The most prevalent of these is the low mass (if it may be termed a "devotion"); and there are apparently few Communities, on either side of the Atlantic, who do not manage to have a daily celebration, though there is not quite so much uniformity of practice in this respect

¹E.g., the Sisters of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Society of St. John the Evangelist, the Community of St. John Baptist, and the Society of the Love of Jesus (Canadian).

²E.g., the Community of St. Wilfrid, the Society of the Divine Compassion, the Community of the Sacred Passion, the Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and others.

³Exceptions--Brotherhood of St. Barnabas, the Community of the Transfiguration (both American--and both having, apparently, a rather special devotion to the Book of Common Prayer).

⁴See n. 3 above.

as in the case of the saying of the Canonical Hours (apparently, however, for the sole reason that it is not always possible to secure a priest).

Other forms of the mass are also used, but less frequently. The high celebration has wide vogue, though there are some Communities which, because of inability to secure acolytes, content themselves with the Missa Cantata.¹ Solemn high mass² is regularly used in a few Communities; for example, in the Order of the Holy Cross, ordinarily on all Sundays and red letter holy days, but its requirements in the way of extra clergy are apparently too pretentious for almost all of the female Orders.

There are three other devotions which, while not enjoying the vogue accorded to the mass and the Offices, are nevertheless in wide use; viz., the Office of the Dead, the Stations of the Cross, and the rosary; and it is not apparent that there is any appreciable difference in the degree to which each of these, in its respective place, is used. Their use might be characterized in the following manner:

- 1) the Office of the Dead is ordinarily said about once a month;³
- 2) the Stations of the Cross are sometimes said on Fridays, but they are more often said only in Lent;
- 3) the rosary is apparently used by perhaps a majority of the Communities, but individually rather than as a Community devotion (there are some Orders, however, which say it in Community; e.g., the American Franciscans and the Poor Clares).

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament⁴ is also in wide--but not general--use; and quite often it takes the form of Adoration.⁵ It is interesting to observe that two-thirds of the Communities mentioning one or the other are American. (Is this because two-thirds of the Communities that use this devotion are American? Or is it because Benediction is a devotion concerning which there has been considerable controversy in England, and the English Communities therefore hesitate to mention its use?)

¹A sung low mass.

²Requires three ministers (two of them in priest's Orders), use of incense, etc., and ordinarily employs from four or six to eight or ten acolytes.

³The Brotherhood of St. Barnabas (an American hospital Order) uses this devotion once a week.

⁴A devotion in which the Host (Blessed Sacrament) is placed in a receptacle called the monstrance or ostensorium, adored, and used for the blessing (or Benediction) of the Faithful.

⁵The service of Benediction, with the exception that the congregation is not blessed with the Host.

The use of Latin is not confined to the saying of the Offices (for, as has been pointed out, the Anglican Church does not stipulate what language shall be used, but only that it shall be understood by the people). At least two cases are known (and there are perhaps several others) where Benediction is sung in Latin even where the Offices themselves are recited in the vernacular. And that the mass itself has been said in Latin at least as early as 1898 would appear from the following testimony, apparently authentic, of an eye-witness of that time:

I attended a mass at Queen Square which was in Latin and the demeanour of the assembled Sisters (Anglicans) showed that they were witnessing a service to which they were quite accustomed.¹

In this connection it may not be inappropriate to quote Sister Mary Agnes' impressive description of some of the ceremonies at Holy Hour² as they were observed in her (Father Ignatius') Benedictine convent at some time prior to 1890:

The altar is for the occasion adorned with about 105 lighted candles. These are intermingled with vases of exquisite flowers. . . . The Host is put into a Monstrance, and enthroned amidst lighted tapers, flowers, jewels, and clouds of incense, and at the sound of sweet music and singing (in Latin) bottles of Eau de Cologne are poured over the altar, to be, as Father Ignatius frequently said, 'wasted on Jesus, like Mary's alabaster box of ointment.

The tabernacle is of exquisite beauty and workmanship, with crimson velvet curtains, looped up with massive gold chains, over which is a real diamond cross. . . . There is a piece of cloth of gold used for the Host, on which are many jewels; one small corner of the cloth alone has, I think, seventeen rings, which formerly belonged to a certain sister.

The boys on this occasion are clothed in scarlet cassocks, each with a white cotta, trimmed with lace; the abbot himself appears in gorgeous apparel, as also those who assist him.

The nuns wear long white veils down to the ground, over which are their crimson veils, used only during the adoration of the Host, with long trains.³

¹Walter Walsh, The Secret History of the Oxford Movement (London: Church Association, 1898), pp. 193-94 (quotation from Owen C.H. King). Mr. King also mentions the Latin hymns which he has heard sung at Benediction in one of the English convents (prior to 1898). This recalls the statement that a Latin translation of the Prayer Book of 1552 was used in some Irish churches during the reign of Edward VI.

²An hour of meditation and devotions (including the singing of the Tantum Ergo and O Hostia Salutaris) in the presence of the Host exposed in a monstrance or ostensorium.

³Sister Mary Agnes, O.S.B., Nunnery Life in the Church of England (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1890), pp. 131-32.

Sister Mary Agnes was of opinion that Holy Hour, as they observed it in the Benedictine convent, was perhaps more "solemn and gorgeously bewildering" than in any Roman Catholic Church in England. It is doubtful whether that is true to-day. Holy Hour, as used by the Religious to-day, has, it is true, a "solemn and gorgeous" background--flowers, candles, and incense; but the ceremonies are amongst the most simple that are in use amongst Anglo-Catholics. Its use, however, is undoubtedly growing, and it is thought that it is not improbable that it now has a more or less regular place in the devotional life of perhaps more than one-third of the Anglican Religious Orders in, for example, the United States.

There is a wide variety in the observance of holy days. The minimum practice, however, is to keep all the days of the Book of Common Prayer. The two most penitential days of the year are, of course, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and these are often days of extreme discipline. As an example of perhaps the most severe practice with reference to the former, one might probably use this account--written, however, in 1890--which Sister Mary Agnes, O.S.B., gives of the solemnities which obtained in her convent (and to understand these customs one should remember that the purpose of Ash Wednesday is to remind the Faithful that they are dust and that to dust they will return):

On Ash Wednesday we had nothing to eat or drink until six o'clock in the evening; we stayed in church practically the whole of the day.

The floor of the church is strewn with ashes and cinders from the grates, and we sit on the ground in the ashes instead of in our stalls.

After compline we have to lash ourselves with the Discipline,¹ and then we have to go to bed unwashed, as a penance for our sins. We are not even allowed to shake the ashes out of our serge habits before retiring for the night; to do so would be to break solemn silence, so we actually sit in ashes all day, and sleep in them all night.²

It is only fair, however, to say that there are Anglican nuns of to-day who knew the Anglican nuns of that day and who seriously question the authenticity of Sister Mary Agnes' testimony (and certainly her book is written in very controversial manner). In any event, it is certain that no evidence, or even rumor, has been encountered of any such practices in vogue in any Anglican Community to-day. Probably the penitential discipline

¹A whip with seven cords.

²Sister Mary Agnes, op. cit., pp. 113-14.

of most Communities is limited to such supplementary devotions as the Penitential Discipline and an abstinence from food until six o'clock in the evening, which is the end of the ecclesiastical day.

The custom with reference to retreats is one of considerable variety. There are at least four Communities which do not spend more than three days a year in this manner;¹ but, although there are also many other customs, by far the most generally observed is to go into Community retreat one week each year, in addition to individual retreats of one day each month for each Religious--a total of nineteen days a year, that is, for each member of the Community.² Amongst the most exacting of the Communities in this respect are the American Franciscans and the Poor Clares who spend, all told, about thirty days a year in this way (the latter Order hopes to develop the Enclosed Life in the American Church).

The use of silence

The Enclosed Orders are, of course, unusually strict in this respect. In some cases all communications are in writing. The Society of the Precious Blood, for example, observes Silence throughout the entire day, except at recreation and on the feast day of their Name, and also with the following principal exceptions:

At the striking of the Hours of Community say, 'May the sweet will of God be done, praised, blessed, and eternally exalted forever.'

On passing the Chapel doors or windows, they say, 'Blessed be Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar'--and they make the sign of the cross.³

This, of course, is the technique of only the Contemplatives and is much more severe, in some respects, than that of the other Orders.

In most non-Contemplative Orders, while there is wide

¹Viz., the Brotherhood of St. Francis of Assisi (English--works with tramps), the Community of St. Giles (English--works with lepers), the Community of St. Andrew of Scotland (Scottish), and the Brotherhood of St. Barnabas (American--hospital work).

²This is the custom, for example, of the following English Communities: Community of St. Wilfrid, Sisters of the Transfiguration, Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Community of St. Laurence, and many others; Scottish: Community of St. Andrew of Scotland; American: Community of St. John Baptist; Canadian: Society of the Love of Jesus.

³Mother Millicent Mary of the Will of God, S.P.B., letter, August 3, 1931, pp. 9-10.

variety in details, the observance of silence is generally approximately as follows:

1) Solemn Silence (that is, no word spoken) from after the last Office of the day until after mass of the following morning;

2) Solemn Silence at all times in certain parts of the convent or monastery (for example, and most frequently, in all corridors);

3) Simple Silence (that is, conversation only when necessary in line of duty) during certain other hours of the day (it is in the choice of these hours that the widest variety prevails).

This general emphasis upon the use of Silence--very characteristic of the Religious Life--has led, of course, to the more or less unconscious development of manual signs (though it is not apparent that any Order has acquired any definite and complete system in this matter). By way of illustration one might mention such details as the pointing to an open window or open door--meaning to shut it; but it is doubtful whether signs are used beyond this very elementary point. Often, however, as in the case of the Enclosed Communities, recourse is had to communication by means of writing.¹

Concerning food and sleep

The general tendency in matters of food is, of course, toward simplicity of diet; but, except in this, the general customs in this respect vary little from those of Anglo-Catholics at large. There is ordinarily, except on the usual Anglo-Catholic days of fasting and abstinence (Fridays of the year and the Wednesdays and Fridays of Lent) little or no limitation in the matter of quantity; in fact, in some Communities there is definite concern to see that the Religious eat enough to maintain physical health and strength.

There are, however, Communities in which the emphasis is placed upon severe and rigid discipline in matters of food, as at all other points. Three of the Communities,² for example, never use meat, and it is also apparent that in at least one of the Communities (the Society of the Precious Blood) there are rigid limitations in the matter of quantity, as the following menu of their principal meal will show:

¹Ibid., p. 9; and Religious of the Order of the Holy Cross (American) have been observed communicating in this way during their times of Simple Silence.

²Congregation of the Servants of Christ, the Society of the Precious Blood, and Christa Seva Sangha (cf. The Little Chronicle of the American Greyfriars, XII [March, 1932], 22-23).

Two ounces cheese
Bread and one ounce butter
Vegetables
Stewed fruit

But discipline to this extent is, amongst Anglican Religious, the exception rather than the rule.

Very much the same thing may be said of the matter of sleep. Most of the Communities allow from seven and one-half to eight hours for sleep each night, and some provide for from thirty minutes to one hour in the afternoon which may be used in this way if the Religious so desire (sometimes, however, only with permission).

There is, of course, also sometimes an ascetic tendency at this point, too; for there are a few Communities; for example, the English convent of the Order of St. Anne, and the Society of the Precious Blood--both Enclosed--which allow only seven hours of sleep, but there are apparently no Communities which allow less than this. It should also be mentioned that the Precious Blood nuns apparently "take turns" in rising to keep the Night Watch before the altar. The severity of this discipline is, however, as in the matter of food, exceptional rather than characteristic. The general trend is decidedly toward the maintenance of eight hours of uninterrupted rest.

Offenses and punishments

Few accounts of the punishments in vogue in Anglican Religious Houses have been so complete as the account published in 1890 by Sister Mary Agnes¹ and purporting to be in vogue in the Benedictine convent of which she was a member. The following penalties will perhaps be illustrative:

Rule 3--Never to hold possession of, or make use of anything, unless given or lent by the Superior.
Punishment--To hold it up before the Blessed Sacrament for a week, at the 'Magnificat.'

Rule 4--Never to touch or look at a book, letter, or newspaper, unless holy obedience compels us to do so.
Punishment--To wear such article tied round the neck for two days.

Rule 6--In speaking to a secular or extern, to do so with eyes fixed on the ground.
Punishment--To be blindfolded at each office on the following day.

Rule 9--Never to allow criticising thoughts upon the action of a Superior to dwell on the mind.
Punishment--Not to be allowed to genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament for two days.

¹Sister Mary Agnes, op. cit., pp. 121-27.

Rule 14--To obey the convent bell as the voice of an angel calling us.

Punishment (if late for matins)--To recite the whole of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, kneeling.

Rule 15--Never to be late at meals, choir, dormitory, or work.

Punishment--If late at meals, to eat off the floor; if late for choir, to kneel at the door during the office; as to the rest, any penance the Superior likes to impose.

Rule 18--Never to excuse ourselves if in fault.

Punishment--To kneel in front of the altar, holding a large crucifix at every office, for one day.

Rule 19--Never to excuse ourselves, even if unjustly accused of any fault, unless it be necessary for God's glory that the true offender should be discovered.

Punishment--Same as that for the preceding offense.

Rule 21--Never to be demonstrative in our affections, even towards a spiritual sister.

Punishment--Not to be allowed to speak to such sister for any length of time our Superior likes to appoint.

Rule 23--Never to touch food or water out of meal times.

Punishment--To wear a piece of bread tied round the neck for two days, and to go without the next meal.

It would appear that the offenses of which the Communities are most conscious to-day might perhaps be classified under these three heads:

- 1) Violation of the rule;
- 2) Carelessness in carrying out instructions;
- 3) Forgetfulness in carrying out instructions.

Insubordination, conscious and deliberate, is apparently almost unknown. An American Religious of the All Saints' Sisters of the Poor remarked, "A Sister may or may not like what the Reverend Mother has said to her, but I cannot even conceive of her 'answering back.' It simply isn't done." And a monk of the Order of the Holy Cross said,

Obedience is unquestionably the hardest part of the Rule. But we believe that, in matters pertaining to the Community Life, the voice of the Superior is the voice of God, and we are taught to obey--inwardly as well as outwardly.

It should also be said that no evidence of any kind whatever--and over a period of several years (including visits of several weeks at a time)--has been found of sexual immorality in any form. In not a few cases the Communities themselves have keenly resented any question having to do with this subject (justifiably so, from their point of view)--partly because of its intensely personal nature, and partly, perhaps, because of their knowledge of the implications which it conveys to some minds. One Mother Superior, when asked for her opinion as to the sexual

morality of the Communities, replied, "Let evil be to him who thinks evil. We do not think in those terms."¹ Another Superior expressed a similar thought when she remarked, "I am surprised that such a question should be asked about a Religious Order; for the moral atmosphere is very high."² Order after Order has stated, "The problem does not arise."³ And one Assistant Superior, in undertaking to explain why the celibacy of the Religious Life need raise no sexual problems, remarked, "The life of the Religious is full of outlets for human affection, and for the expression of the creative instinct in other directions"⁴--a statement which will probably be readily intelligible to the psychologist.

The subject of punishments, however--separate and distinct, that is, from the subject of offenses--is one on which it is difficult to form any accurate and comprehensive opinion, for the reason that most of the English Communities and approximately half of the American Communities carefully avoid all references to the matter (probably because they feel that it is a personal matter). It may be said, however, that there has been no evidence that any Community to-day has so definitely an organized system of punishments as that mentioned in 1890 by Sister Mary Agnes, O.S.B., and to which reference has already been made.

Nor is there any evidence (though it may exist, and may even be felt to have an occasional legitimate place) of the use of punishments which are at least partially aimed at the humiliation of the individual Religious in the presence of other members of the Community--punishments, for example, such as that of wearing certain articles around the neck for two days, or such as the following (also mentioned by Sister Mary Agnes):

Once the Mother Superior actually pinned a large paper in front of me, and another on my back. On the latter was written, in large letters--'Jesus, Mercy,' 'Pray for me,'

¹Mother Leila Mary, S.S.M.V., interview, August 20, 1931. The Mother added, "It is only a phase of people's minds which makes them think in those terms. I have never come into contact with one case of sexual immorality in the Religious Life."

²Superior of the Sisters of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, statement, December 1, 1931, p. 4.

³E.g., the statement was made by the Community of the Transfiguration (American), Community of St. Denys, Community of St. Andrew of Scotland, Community of St. Laurence, Community of the Epiphany (Cornwall), Brotherhood of St. Francis of Assisi, and others.

⁴Assistant Superior, S.S.J.D., interview, Toronto, Canada, October 9, 1931.

and 'Beware of me.' All through that day I had to wear this.¹ Such cases, however, are believed to be extreme, if they exist at all, and probably quite foreign to the general atmosphere of Religious Orders.

It should also be mentioned that, while Sister Mary Agnes, writing in 1890, declared that in the Llanthony convent she had, on one occasion, been punished with a seven-corded whip,² and that she had often had her "ears boxed,"³ there is no evidence of any use of corporal punishment to-day.

Nine of the Communities (five English and four American), and probably this number may be at least doubled, say that they use no punishments of any kind whatever. Such evidence, however, as has been encountered concerning punishments in vogue in the American Communities, though they may not be typical of those used on the other side of the Atlantic, would seem to show that they usually fall into one or more of the following four classes, viz.:

1) Deprivation of liberties (prohibition, for example, of leaving the conventual or monastic enclosure);

2) Prohibition of the reception of the Holy Communion (apparently used only in extreme cases);

3) Solitude (perhaps the being sent to one's cell to meditate);

4) Suitable prayers to be said (sometimes in the place where the offense was committed).

The first two appear to be characterized by a penal emphasis; the latter two, by a remedial emphasis.

Communicability with the outside world

Perhaps no statement concerning the Religious Life could be very much farther from the truth than that the Religious are "locked up" and cannot "get out"--a statement, nevertheless, which is occasionally made. It is not probable (though this statement naturally does not lend itself to documentation) that there is an Anglican convent or monastery in the world--including those of the Enclosed Orders--from which a Religious could not walk out almost any hour of the day that he chose. Sister Mary Agnes (and she is no friend of the Religious Orders!) admits this time and time again.

It is true that the strictly Enclosed Orders have virtually no physical contact with the outside world, but that is entirely

¹Sister Mary Agnes, op. cit., p. 101.

²Ibid., pp. 97-99.

³Ibid., p. 97.

of their own volition and could be obviated any time they chose; and there are times when they leave the convent enclosure (in cases of serious illness, for example, or whenever it is otherwise deemed desirable to do so, they are taken to the hospital to receive better medical care than would otherwise be possible).¹ Visitors, too, are permitted; for there are, as a matter of actual data, very few convents or monasteries in the Anglican Church which do not permit visits (often for several days at a time) from properly accredited guests--though, it is true, in the case of the strictly Enclosed Orders, the guests would probably be received by Oblates rather than by the Religious themselves.

In the matter, however, of allowing the Religious to visit their homes there is a wide variety of customs. In the Enclosed Orders this is naturally out of the question--unless, of course, the Religious broke enclosure. And there are several Orders, too, in which there is ordinarily no visiting of former homes; e.g., the American Order of the Holy Cross does not permit it except for the most urgent reasons, and the American Franciscans permit it only "when deemed necessary in charity or justice."²

In the main, however, it may be said that the vast majority of the Religious are free to spend their vacations away from the Religious houses and away from other Religious, though the visits are almost invariably confined to the nearest relatives (parents, sister, or brother). When this detail has been approved, however, the length of the visit may range from a maximum of a month's holidays each year (in the case of at least five Communities)³ down to a minimum of one week a year in the case of several others.⁴

Censorship of correspondence, either incoming or outgoing, of Professed Religious is apparently unknown, though it is true that this is sometimes done in the case of the Novices, and also true that almost always all letters, both incoming and outgoing, go through the Superior's hands before they are distributed. There is, too, occasionally some regulation as to the number of

¹Mother Millicent Mary of the Will of God, written statement, p. 13.

²Father Joseph, O.S.F., written statement, July 25, 1931, p. 5.

³English--Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Community of St. Laurence; Scottish--Community of St. Andrew of Scotland; American--Community of the Transfiguration; Canadian--Society of the Love of Jesus.

⁴The Brotherhood of St. Francis of Assisi and the Community of the Divine Compassion allow three weeks' holidays each year; and many other Orders allow one or two weeks.

letters which may be written within a given period of time. And there is often, too, censorship of general reading matter, even in the case of the Professed, and nearly always in the case of the Novitiate.

Appearance of the habit

It may be well to include a passing reference to the colors of the habits of the various Communities. Black is, of course, more frequently used than any other colors, in fact, approximately as much as all the other colors combined. It is often accompanied, however, by a colored girdle--red, violet or blue.

Grey is probably the next most popular color and is used by perhaps one-fourth of the Orders, both English and American.¹ Blue is also used by several Communities,² as is, of course, white.³ It is strange, perhaps, that more Orders have not selected brown; and, as far as present data show, only one Order (the Community at Ascot Priory) uses purple. There are a few Orders whose habits are characterized by the wearing of a large rosary suspended from the waist, viz., the American Franciscans, the Poor Clares, and the Order of St. Anne, but these are exceptional.

¹English--Order of St. Anne, Sisters of Charity, Sisters of the Transfiguration, Community of St. Giles, and others; American--lay Brothers of Society of St. John the Evangelist, Franciscans, Poor Clares, Order of St. Anne.

²English--Community of St. Laurence, Community of the Epiphany, and probably others; American--Sisterhood of St. Mary the Virgin, and Community of the Transfiguration.

³Congregation of the Servants of Christ--English; Society of St. John the Evangelist--in tropical countries; and the Order of the Holy Cross--American.

CHAPTER IV
INTERIOR LIFE OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS II

Note

As in the case of the preceding chapter, the following data are based upon the Communities of England, Ireland, Scotland, the United States, and Canada; but not of the other countries. Approximately seventy-eight Communities have been included in the survey, through the media of personal correspondence, personal interviews and visits (in Canada, the United States, and England), and also through authorized printed literature.

Conditions of postulancy

Age.--In general, the Communities stipulate that the Postulants must be between twenty-one and forty years old. There are, however, a few (perhaps seven or eight) exceptions to the minimum age here given, and also innumerable exceptions to the maximum age; for example, there are at least two Communities which will accept Postulants at seventeen,¹ three others at eighteen,² and another at twenty.³ It is interesting to note that these are all British Communities; and, on the other hand, there are probably not many Communities which would reject otherwise desirable Aspirants because they were a little past forty years of age.

Educational requirements.--In general, too, there are seldom any very definite requirements at this point. The Community of the Transfiguration (Ohio) requires a high school education,⁴ and the American Community of St. John Baptist stipulates the necessity of "a good education" (one-sixth of their Sisters hold college degrees).⁵ But most of the Orders apparently require no further educational equipment than ability to read the Office. This does not mean that the Religious are necessarily of meager education, but only that it is possible to be a Religious without being well educated.

Intellectual background.--At this point there is wide

¹Sisters of the Church, and Benedictines of Nashdom Abbey.

²Order of St. Paul, Order of St. Anne, and (in Canada) the Sisters of the Love of Jesus.

³Community of St. Denys.

⁴Mother Beatrice Martha, C.T., statement, p. 1.

⁵Sister Florence Teresa, C.S.J.B., Superior, typewritten statement, July 18, 1931, p. 2.

difference between what the Orders require and what they actually manage to secure. In the United States, for example, there are three Communities which report that their Religious have had, on the average, "high school or over"; there is another which reports its Religious as usually having had a college education or at least a nurse's training;¹ and still another reports, as has already been mentioned, that one-sixth of its Religious hold college degrees.²

And in England there are two Communities which would seem to be favored in this respect; viz., the Benedictines of Burnham Abbey (whose Religious are said to be mainly of University training),³ and the Order of the Holy Paraclete (a Community of secondary school teachers--a majority of whose Sisters are University graduates).⁴ St. Peter's, Kilburn, is also not without its share of educated Religious, for its choir sisters are said usually to have had a college, or at least a private school, training.⁵ There may, too, be similar Communities amongst those who have not felt free to furnish data concerning this matter.

Social background.--If there are any Communities whose Religious are exclusively of any one social class, it has not been apparent in the present documents, though one naturally expects to find a somewhat higher social background on the part of the Religious of some Orders (those, perhaps, which have a special appeal for the better educated people) than of others. But it is believed that almost all Communities, even in England, regard this as being of secondary importance. Cooks and countesses are on equal footing once Profession has been reached.

Religious background.--This varies considerably. The vast majority of Anglican Religious are, of course, of Anglican background, and it is true that there are many Communities⁶ in which from ninety per cent to one hundred per cent of the Religious have never known anything but the Anglican Communion; on the other hand, however, there are those which have a much smaller

¹Mother Beatrice Martha, C.T., statement, p. 1.

²Cf. note 5, p. 26.

³Dom Martin Collett, statement, October 29, 1931, p. 1.

⁴Sister Ethel Mary, O.H.P., pro Prioress, letter, August 16, 1931, p. 1.

⁵Mother Lisa, O.S.P., statement, August 5, 1931, p. 6.

⁶Amongst the Communities in which one hundred per cent of the Religious were born and raised in the Anglican Communion are: Brotherhood of St. Francis of Assisi, Community of the Epiphany, Community of St. Laurence, Society of the Precious Blood (enclosed), Sisters of the Transfiguration.

percentage than this; for example, in one Order¹ approximately one-half of the Religious are converts to the Anglican Communion. It is not apparent, however, that such converts as there are in the Orders have come overwhelmingly from any one source, though it would seem that the Methodists are perhaps more numerous represented here than are the other denominations. It is noteworthy that only in exceptional cases have the converts come from the Roman Church, though there is one Order² which has as many as three Religious who were formerly communicants of that body.

Personal influence back of Vocations.--It is significant that it is almost the unanimous opinion of those Orders which have expressed themselves on this subject that Vocations almost never come through the influence of Anglican parents, and very seldom through the influence of Anglican priests; that, as a matter of fact, almost all Anglican parents and most Anglican priests usually oppose, rather than encourage, the trying of a Vocation. This, of course, is in marked contrast to the support which the Roman Religious receive from so many in their Church--and especially from their priests--and represents an interesting psychological situation and one of the most difficult which Anglican Religious have to meet. It is also in marked antithesis to such official pronouncements as the Anglican communion has recently passed upon the Religious Life, which have, it is believed, invariably been favorable to the Religious Orders and their Life and work. This situation will be discussed in a later section;³ it is sufficient, for the time being, to record its existence.

Length of time before Profession

There are several Communities in England which will receive a Profession in two years, and it would seem that a person should know what he wants after having lived the Life for that length of time; but, nevertheless, the average probationary period in the British Isles is four years. This is apparently ten months longer than the average time (three years and two months) in the United States and Canada. American Communities, however, are perhaps more uniform in their requirements in this direction.

There is an interesting difference between these figures

¹Brotherhood of St. Barnabas (Brother Gouverneur P. Hance, S.B.B., Superior, statement, July 21, 1931, p. 1).

²Community of St. Giles (Mother Clare, C.S.G., statement, July 21, 1931, p. 2).

³Cf. Section on "Anglican Attitudes toward the Religious Life" (Chapter VII of the complete dissertation in the University of Chicago Libraries).

as of 1932 and those given by Cameron¹ in 1924. The average minimum probationary period in the latter year was apparently three years and six months--the same on both sides of the Atlantic --apparently showing that since that time there has been a tendency on the part of the American Communities to shorten (and, on the part of the British Communities, to lengthen) the time of Postulancy and Novitiate. The historical value of this observation should not, however, be overemphasized, for it is not impossible that there may have been some discrepancy in the respective manner of interpreting the figures furnished by the various Communities in the two different periods. The point, nevertheless, is not without considerable interest and also, perhaps, some degree of value.

The longest term of Novitiate in the United States is probably that of the Brotherhood of St. Barnabas--six years;² and in England that distinction would appear to belong to the Society of the Precious Blood, an enclosed and Contemplative Order which does not permit Life Profession in less than seven years.³ There are, however, at least three other English Communities which require a Probation of six years;⁴ and two more (one English and one Irish) which are known to require five years,⁵ not to mention several more who are said to require the latter time but from whom no data on this point have been received. In general it may be said that the enclosed Orders require the longest period of probation, and this is probably as it should be.

Percentage of Postulants and Novices
who take Life Vows

It is perhaps here that one encounters the widest differences of experience. One may, however, begin with the statement that almost all the Orders under discussion ordinarily realize Life Professions from at least twenty-five per cent of those who begin Postulancy. Some find that the percentage, in their ex-

¹A. T. Cameron, Directory of Religious Communities of Men and Women (London: The Faith House, 1924).

²Brother Gouverneur P. Hance, S.B.B., statement, p. 5; Questions Answered, brochure (North East, Pennsylvania: St. Barnabas' Brotherhood, 1929), p. 3.

³Mother Millicent Mary of the Will of God, S.P.B., statement, August 3, 1931, p. 4.

⁴Order of St. Anne (enclosed), Community of the Sacred Passion, and Congregation of the Servants of Christ (Benedictine --enclosed).

⁵Community of St. John the Evangelist (Dublin), and Society of the Divine Compassion.

perience, is thirty-three and one-third per cent;¹ while still others state that fifty per cent of their Postulants are eventually Professed (the highest percentage, however, in the United States),² or even from sixty per cent to sixty-six and two-thirds per cent³ (the latter figure apparently representing the highest percentage of Postulants Professed in any Anglican Community).

It is reasonable, of course, to expect that a higher percentage of Novices would go on to Life Profession than would be the case with the Postulants, and this expectation is in accordance with the facts. It is true that the American Franciscans, for example, have not received Life Profession from perhaps more than twenty-five per cent of their Novices,⁴ but allowance must be made for the fact that they are one of the youngest of the Communities; at that, however, there are several other Communities who do not feel that their experience justifies them in naming a very much higher percentage.⁵ But there are other Orders whose experience in this connection ranges from sixty per cent to ninety-four per cent (the Servants of Christ, for example, report that "in the thirty-four years of the life of the Order only one Sister has failed to go on from Simple Profession to Solemn Vows,"⁶ and this is all the more remarkable when one considers that their minimum probationary period is six years and three months.⁷)

Vows

There is almost complete uniformity of experience in the matter of the nature of the Vows. Apparently all--at least no evidence has been encountered to the contrary--take the Vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience; and apparently, too, these are, in all cases, for life. The life vows are considered to be of the very essence of the Religious Life.

¹American Community of St. John Baptist, Community of the Holy Name.

²Community of the Transfiguration (Ohio), Community of St. Laurence (English).

³Community of the Epiphany, Society of the Precious Blood (enclosed), Community of St. Peter (Kilburn), Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

⁴Father Joseph, O.S.F., Guardian, letter, July 25, 1931, p. 3.

⁵E.g., American Community of St. John Baptist, Sisters of Charity, Society of the Good Shepherd.

⁶Mother Elizabeth, S.C., statement, p. 2.

⁷Ibid., p. 2.

Sometimes a fourth Vow is permitted (or even required); e.g., it is said that the Community of St. Mary takes a special Vow never to leave that Order for another Community (St. Mary's, in its earlier life, trained several Sisters who left that Order to become Mother Superiors of other Communities); the Community of St. Andrew of Scotland takes a special Vow of "self-dedication," though it is not known what this covers;¹ and the Sisters of the Precious Blood (enclosed) are permitted, in individual cases and if they wish, to take a fourth Vow.²

There is apparently no Order in the Anglican Communion which has a secret Community Vow--beyond, that is, the Vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience--and many of the Communities represent even the suggestion that such a thing could exist.

Apparent reasons why some leave before Profession

There are many reasons which the Orders assign as to why some Postulants and Novices do not go on to their Profession; but there are three on which--on both sides of the Atlantic--they especially agree; viz., (1) incompatibility; (2) poor physical health; (3) inability to obey.

It is interesting, though perhaps without any special significance, that four of the American Communities (though none of the English Communities) mention some phase of "needed at home" as being one of the most frequent causes for leaving before Profession.

Defections after Profession

There are, of course, cases of those who have taken Life Vows and have later come to the conclusion that it was a serious mistake. Six of the Orders, however--three English and three American--state that this has never happened in the entire history of their Community; a seventh, the Community of St. Denys, says that it has known "only one" such case in its thirty years' history;³ and other Orders use such expressions as "one per cent," "exceedingly rare," and "exceptional cases."

At least fifteen cases of mistaken Vocations, however, have come to light, in eight different Communities; fifteen, that is, whose Professions were little less than tragic. Perhaps this figure would have to be doubled to meet the facts, for Orders

¹Mother Amy Agnes, C.S.A.S., statement, November 19, 1931, p. 3.

²Mother Millicent Mary of the Will of God, S.P.B., statement, August 3, 1931.

³Community of St. Denys, written statement, October, 1931, p. 2.

would naturally be reticent in reporting data on this subject; in fact, it is thought not improbable that even forty or fifty post-Reformation Anglican Religious may have had the experience mentioned. If this estimate is accurate, it would constitute one such person for the entire history of every two Communities, a very small percentage, of course, of all who have been Professed. The figures furnished by the Orders themselves range from no per cent (perhaps the experience of the majority) to one per cent (and, in no case, higher than two per cent).

The smallness of percentages of tragic Professions--small, for example, in contrast to the high percentages furnished by divorce courts--can perhaps be largely accounted for on the basis of the comparatively long trial period of Postulancy and Novitiate before Life Profession is permitted.

Numerical strength

There is perhaps no phase of the subject on which data, from the historian's point of view, are so much needed; and there is likewise perhaps no phase of the subject, more than this, upon which the Communities give less information. The majority of the Orders carefully avoid all references to the subject, and this includes, without exception, all the largest Communities on both sides of the Atlantic (all of those, for example, which are known to have two hundred or more Religious each). It is, then, manifestly impossible to speak with authority on this subject, and it is doubtful whether anyone possesses sufficient authoritative data to answer the question accurately.

Time and time again one encounters the statement, glibly made, that the number of Anglican Religious to-day exceeds that in the time of Henry VIII's dissolution of the Religious houses. This statement cannot be either proven or disproven on the basis of available data; nor is there, for that matter, any point in even attempting accurately to estimate the number of Anglican Religious in the world to-day. The temptation to do so is naturally strong, but any result would be, historically, almost valueless.

Such data, however, as have been received would seem to justify the statement that the following Orders of the British Isles, for example, are amongst those which are, in 1932, undoubtedly growing:¹

¹It is regrettable that no comment can be made as to whether there is continued growth on the part of some of the largest Communities; for, as has been said, they are amongst those from whom no data of this kind were received. It is thought to be not at all improbable that a complete list of such British Communities as are growing would have to include perhaps five times as many names as are here listed.

Order of St. Paul
Sisters of the Church
Community of St. Laurence
Servants of Christ (enclosed)
Community of St. Denys
Society of the Precious Blood (enclosed)
Community of St. Giles
Benedictines of Burnham Abbey
Society of the Good Shepherd
Order of the Holy Paraclete
Society of the Sacred Mission
Order of St. Anne (enclosed)
Society of St. John the Evangelist (Dublin)
Sisters of Charity (apparently growing)

It is interesting and significant to notice that these, without exception, are Orders of the most substantial kind; amongst the most severe, that is, in either their requirements for membership in the first place or in the conditions under which the Religious must do their work after Profession. The Benedictines and the Order of the Holy Paraclete, for example, are amongst the most exacting in their educational requirements for membership. The Society of St. John the Evangelist has apparently an unusually difficult field to work--that section of Ireland in which opposition to Anglo-Catholicism is often intense. The Sisters of St. Giles work exclusively amongst lepers. The Society of the Sacred Mission sends its nuns to Africa. And it is especially noteworthy that this list of growing Communities includes three of the four strictly enclosed Orders; the most severe, in many respects, in the entire Anglican communion (the fourth enclosed Order, the Benedictine nuns of St. Mary's Abbey, Kent, did not feel that they could furnish data on this point). These facts should be not without significance to the Communities themselves.

Amongst the American and Canadian Communities which are growing there are these five:

Society of St. John the Evangelist
Community of the Transfiguration
Order of the Holy Cross
Society of the Love of Jesus (Canadian)
Sisterhood of St. John the Divine (Canadian)

There are probably at least six or seven other Communities on this side of the Atlantic, including some of the largest, of which the same statement could be made were the necessary data available.¹

It is interesting to note that all of the Canadian Communities are believed to be growing. Perhaps this is scarcely

¹Cf. note 1, p. 32.

what one would expect; for Canada, like the north of Ireland, is less hospitable to Anglo-Catholicism than many other sections of the continent. On the other hand, Chicago, although known for its Anglo-Catholic tendencies, is believed to have not more than three or four convents of Religious in the entire diocese. These are paradoxical situations.

In conclusion it may be said that there are in the Anglican communion in 1932 (if one includes five Communities which are apparently about to become extinct) a total of approximately one hundred and two different Orders of Religious operating more than five hundred institutions of one kind or another.¹

¹ In 1932 there are approximately eighty-six Communities (again, including the five which are apparently almost extinct) in England, Ireland, Scotland, the United States, and Canada-- and these operate 488 institutions (211 Religious houses and 277 other establishments).

